

We claim:

1. An evaporative device comprising:

a container for holding a liquid, the container having an opening;

a porous wick extending through the opening such that a portion of the wick contacts the liquid held within the container and a portion of the wick is exposed to the ambient environment, wherein the wick transfers the liquid from the container; and

a capillary member having a surface in communication with a portion of the wick, wherein one or more capillary pathways are disposed along the surface of the capillary member along which liquid, transferred by the wick from the container, is drawn by capillary action for dispersion to the ambient air.

2. An evaporative device according to claim 1, wherein the capillary member is a capillary plate having one or more capillary channels, and

wherein a portion of the capillary channels is in communication with a portion of the wick such that the capillary channels transfer liquid from the wick for dispersion to the ambient environment.

3. An evaporative device according to claim 2, wherein the capillary plate is substantially wing shaped.

4. An evaporative device comprising:

a container for holding a liquid, the container having an opening;

a porous wick extending through the opening such that a portion of the wick contacts the liquid held within the container and a portion of the wick extends outside of the container such that the wick transfers the liquid from the container; and

a capillary plate having a surface in communication with a portion of the wick, wherein the surface has one or more capillary pathways along which liquid, transferred by the wick from the container, is drawn by capillary action for dispersion to the ambient environment.

5. An evaporative device according to claim 4, wherein the capillary plate is nonporous.
6. An evaporative device according to claim 4, wherein the capillary plate is substantially wing shaped.
7. An evaporative device according to claim 4, wherein the exposed capillary pathways are substantially continuous along their lengths.
8. An evaporative device according to claim 4, wherein the exposed capillary pathways comprise one or more capillary channels and a portion of the capillary channels is in communication with a portion of the wick extending outside the container.
9. An evaporative device according to claim 8, wherein the capillary channels are substantially V-shaped in cross section.
10. An evaporative device according to claim 4, wherein the capillary plate is detachably secured to one or both of the wick and the container.
11. An evaporative device according to claim 4, wherein the surface is one of a top and a bottom of the capillary plate.
12. An evaporative device according to claim 4, further comprising a cover that encases a portion of the portion of the wick extending outside of the container.
13. An evaporative device according to claim 4, wherein there are plural capillary plates, each having one or more capillary pathways, and the capillary pathways are in communication with the portion of the wick extending outside of the container.

14. An evaporative device according to claim 13, wherein the plural capillary plates are movable such that the capillary pathways of each are removable from communication with the portion of the wick extending outside of the container.

15. An evaporative device according to claim 14, wherein the plural capillary plates are actuatable in a direction away from the wick to separate the capillary pathways thereof from communication with the portion of the wick exposed to the ambient air.

16. An evaporative device according to claim 4, wherein the capillary pathways are exposed on the surface of the capillary plate.

17. An evaporative device according to claim 4, wherein the capillary plate is composed of polyethylene.

18. An evaporative system comprising:
an evaporative device according to claim 4; and
a housing for containing at least a portion of the evaporative device.

19. An evaporative system according to claim 18, wherein the evaporative device according to claim 4 is detachably attached to the housing.

20. An evaporative system according to claim 20, wherein the capillary plate is fixed to the housing, and the container and the wick are detachably attachable to the housing and the capillary plate.